

New WWT Programme in 2024/2025 Sidetracks Women Tours

West Coast Wilderness Cycle Tour

Cycling the best of the West

This tour is truly special in that every day is completely different and unique, offering the very best of the West Coast and the essence of New Zealand beauty - wild, wonderful and adventurous! Enjoy the lush rainforest from different angles, cycle through extraordinary bush and walk among treetops. The new Kawatiri Cycle Trail is now also included!

Itinerary

We bike through unbelievable scenery, from wild coastlines to lush rainforests. We enjoy beautiful sweeping downhill trails, bike along historic waterways, glide past waterfalls and ride on stunning backcountry tracks. We sneak in an exhilarating treetop adventure among the giants of the West Coast rainforest. And last but not least explore the new Kawatiri Cycle Trail!

Day 1: Christchurch - Arthur's Pass – Hokitika Gorge - Hokitika

We will meet in Christchurch between 9:30am and 10:00am. On the way to 'The Coast', we drive through Arthur's Pass National Park, with its spectacularly winding gorge roads and amazing mountain vistas. We have lunch at a café at Arthur's Pass village (not included). Our destination is the coastal town and 'Greenstone Capital' Hokitika, our base for three nights. We make sure we don't miss out on the breath-taking Hokitika Gorge, a picturesque haven where brilliant turquoise waters meet white limestone cliffs and vibrant rainforest. Accessible through an easy forest trail, it's a visual feast showcasing nature's stunning colour palette. We celebrate our first evening together with a welcome drink in our accommodation (included).

Accommodation: Hokitika - Twin bed Cottages / ensuite

Meals: D

The next few days are dedicated to exploring the West Coast wilderness on bike. Since we spend three nights in Hokitika, we can choose our tour sections, taking into account the weather/wind conditions and make the best of every day if needed. It also allows you to decide each day to join us or - if you feel like a day off - to go for a walk, shop, sit in a cafe or relax

any way you like. We meet you back at our accommodation in the afternoon. Following are the daily cycling tour descriptions.

Day 2: Cycle Greymouth – Kawhaka Intake

We enjoy a full breakfast at our accommodation before starting into our first cycling day. Departing from the historic Greymouth Railway Station, we set off along the mighty Grey River and past a working port, before journeying out to the wild and wonderful Tasman Sea. We follow the coast south, behind sand dunes and along tidal lagoons, until we cross the Taramakau River. Then the trail takes us on the historic Kumara bush rail trails, through regenerating forest and new farmland toward the historic gold mining town of Kumara. From here we cycle to Kapitea Reservoir, cycle along hand-made dams and fresh mountain-water weirs on our way to our final stop of today's cycle day at Kawhaka Intake.

In the evening of our first cycle day we unwind and soothe our muscles in a wood-fired hot tub (included), surrounded by the calming melodies of bird songs and the twinkling night stars for a truly serene evening.

Cycling: ca 4-6 hours / 49 km, easy

Accommodation: Hokitika - Twin bed Cottages / ensuite

Meals: B, L, D, S

Day 3: Cycle Kawhaka Intake – Lake Kaniere - Hokitika

After a full breakfast we take to the bikes again. Today's ride is a little more challenging, but the few short steep sections are also very scenic. There is a new surprise around every corner, as we pass remnants of the gold rush, and follow old logging trams and water races up the Kawaka valley. Soon we descend through ancient Podocarp forest until we reach a sprawling suspension bridge and then cycle through beautiful native bush to pass by Cowboy Paradise (Milltown), a replica Wild West town. An easy and fun descent takes us through native bush and open paddocks to the Arahura river with awesome views of the valley and on to Lake Kaniere, home to towering Kahikatea trees and great birdlife. From here we follow a trail through lush bush that meanders along an old water race and enjoy beautiful views of the Hokitika River as we cycle back to Hokitika.

In the evening we experience the beauty of West Coast's Lowland Wetlands and Lake Mahinapua on an Eco Adventure Boat Cruise (departing at 7pm; included). We enjoy the tranquil birdsong, stunning scenery, and picturesque Mahinapua waterways, capturing the essence of the region's history and natural wonders.

Cycling: ca 4-6 hours / 50 km, moderate

Accommodation: Hokitika - Twin bed Cottages / ensuite

Meals: B, L, D, S

Day 4: Cycle Hokitika – Treetop Walk – Hokitika, Drive to Cape Foulwind

On our last day on the Westcoast Wilderness Cycle we cycle from Hokitika to another West Coast highlight – the Treetop Walkway. Time to get off the bikes to immerse ourselves in the forest in an exciting new way (included). And if you are feeling extra adventurous – and if time allows - you can add a zipline ride to your Tree Top Experience (The West Coast Tower Zipline spans 425m in length, and its speed is in excess of 60km/hr. The Zipline height is 45m or 15 storeys above the ground, with a ride time of 40 seconds – add at your own cost).

Then we hop back on our bikes. As the last bit of the official trail to Ross runs along an old straight gorse-fringed railway track we skip this – in our opinion - boring section and instead enjoy the beautiful bush trail again from a different angle which takes us back to Hokitika. From here we drive to Cape Foulwind, our base for the next two nights. Tonight we will go out for dinner in a local pub or restaurant or turn on the BBQ (both not included). Let's let our mood and the weather decide :-).

Cycling: ca 3-4 hours / 30 km, easy

Accommodation: Cape Foulwind - Motel

Meals: B, L, S

Day 5: Cycle the Kawatiri Cycle Trail

We embark on another extraordinary West Coast adventure: the new Kawatiri cycle trail spans between the Eastern mountains and the Western coastline, offering breath-taking views of the majestic Paparoa Mountain Range. Covering eight gentle sections, this 42 km journey traverses diverse landscapes, providing a memorable experience. Currently, four consecutive sections are open between Westport and Ōkari Lagoon, totalling 22 km. We will cycle back and forth on the completed sections, or, once the trail is entirely finished, cover the entire route. In the evening we go out for dinner again (not included).

Cycling: ca 4-6 hours / 45 km, easy

Accommodation: Cape Foulwind – Motel
or Punakaiki – Motel (WWT24 2111 and WWT25 3001)

Meals: B, L, S

Day 6: Return to Christchurch via Pancake Rocks and Arthur's Pass NP (Optional TranzAlpine Express) and Castle Hill Reserve

Unfortunately, today marks the end of our cycling adventure, but we'll still make attractive stops on the return journey to Christchurch. Our first stop are the Pancake Rocks & Blowholes, rising from the sea at Dolomite Point. They originated approximately 30 million years ago when layers formed on the seabed that rose due to seismic activity. After an easy 20 to 30-minute loop to enjoy the impressive rock formations, we'll head to Greymouth to return our bikes and have lunch in a café (not included).

From here, there's the option to changing up the return trip by booking the TranzAlpine Express via Arthurs Pass to Christchurch (optional from \$249) or you continue the journey in our bus. We pass waterfalls and wild rivers and stop for a short nature walk in breathtaking alpine scenery.

We will also make sure to stop at Castle Hill / Kura Tāwhiti Conservation Reserve, where we can wander through majestic limestone rock formations. The return time to Christchurch is expected to be around 6pm.

Meals: B, S

Included

- Transport in minibus from/to Christchurch
- 3 days cycling on West Coast Wilderness Trail
- 1 day cycling on Kawatiri Trail – Westport/Cape Foulwind
- 4 days Ebike hire including helmet, rear carrier bag, drink bottle cage
- 3 nights in cottages (twin room/ensuite bathroom)
- 2 nights in motel (twin room/ensuite bathroom)
- All transfers from/to daily start/finish of cycle track
- 5x breakfast, 4x picnic lunch, 3x dinner, snacks
- Welcome drink first night
- 1 evening wood fired hot tub
- Eco Adventure Sunset Boat Cruise Wetlands/Lake Mahinapua
- Entrance Fee Treetop Walk
- Visit Pancake Rocks
- Guided short nature walk Arthur's Pass
- Visit Castle Hill / Kura Tawhiti conservation area
- Professional female guide/driver
- All access and concession fees
- Detailed map & track brochure

Optional

Upgrade to single room / ensuite bathroom: \$400

Tranzalpine Express Train Trip Greymouth – Christchurch from \$249